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OCTOBER BOARD MEETING HELD IN COLUMBUS

The City of Columbus hosted the State Transportation Board's October meeting. The Board had the opportunity to visit the recently opened National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, and to tour the many improvements made to the community's riverfront area. Board members also saw a presentation on the proposed development of a whitewater rafting course along the river. Several key leaders from the Columbus area were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the community, including road/bridge dedications for Representative Tom Buck and Representative George W. Ford, Jr., and resolutions for J. Kyle Spencer and John Flournoy.

Approved lettings for November totaled \$198.8 million for 31 projects across Georgia. Twenty-six projects are ARRA funded and 5 are regular programmed projects. Already this fiscal year, the Department has let 93 projects valued at over \$251 million throughout the State.



Members of the Columbus-area Legislative Delegation recognize contributions of several outstanding citizens.

These are highlights from the two Board committees that met in advance of the business meeting:

Finance Committee: Treasurer Kate Pfirman provided an update on the Department's FY2010 budget. To date, about 20 percent of the annual budget has been spent. She also reviewed the planned capital program for FY2010 for GDOT. Total planned lettings for FY2010 are approximately \$1.2 billion after deducting planned expenditures for preliminary engineering, Right of way purchases, contingencies and GARVEE debt service. The \$1.2 billion includes the regular federal formula funds, stimulus funds, LARP lettings, local lettings, transit, most needed and off system.

The Committee also examined the cash balances, motor fuel report and the vacancy report. Motor fuel collections are down by about 18 percent compared to the same time period last fiscal year. Vacancies increased by 48 positions during the month of September, bringing total vacancies to 652.

Transportation Agency Partners Committee: The agency partners reviewed options for potentially amending the current SPLOST legislation to include an option to levy the tax for 20 years in order to be able to bond-finance large scale transit projects. Additionally, there was discussion about the ability to amend the existing SPLOST legislation to allow for a tax above the 2-percent limitation by county without a Constitutional amendment. The matter is currently being reviewed.

Jane Hayse with the Atlanta Regional Commission reviewed the Unified Agenda for Federal Surface Transportation Reauthorization developed by GDOT, ARC, MARTA and GRTA. The Agenda supports five guiding principles: a National Transportation Vision; Strong Federal Funding Support; Multimodal Transportation in Metropolitan Areas; Better Project Delivery; and Preserve Existing Infrastructure.

FORMER LUMPKIN COUNTY COMMISSION CHAIRMAN STEVE GOOCH ELECTED TO TRANSPORTATION BOARD

Steve Gooch was elected on October 28th to the State Transportation Board by a caucus of state representatives and senators from the 9thth Congressional District. He will fill the remaining three years of the term vacated by Steve Farrow in August.



Gooch served eight years with the Lumpkin County Commission. From 2000 to 2004 he was Sole Commissioner and was elected chairman of the newly created five-member board of commissioners in 2005. Georgia Trend Magazine and The Carl Vinson Institute of Government awarded Gooch the State's first ever County Elected Official of the Year award in 2003.

"I look forward to moving into a new level in state government," Gooch said following his election in the Senate Chambers of the State Capitol. "Cities and counties are struggling right now to replace infrastructure. I hope to bring a new local perspective and fresh ideas to the Transportation Board."

Board Workshop November 4th - Atlanta, Georgia
Full Board Meeting on November 18th—Atlanta, Georgia